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## PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD

Washington

STAFF STUDY - PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY PLANNING FOR WESTERN EUROPE

(THIS IS AN APPROVED PAPER)

State Dept. review completed

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PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

STAFF STUDY - PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY PLANNING FOR WESTERN  
EUROPE

NOTE BY THE SECRETARY

The recommendations contained in this staff study were  
approved by the Board at its Seventeenth Meeting, January 15,  
1953.

  
Charles E. Johnson  
Secretary to the Board

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PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Memorandum of January 12, 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE HONORABLE DAVID BRUCE  
UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

SUBJECT: Staff Study on Western Europe

1. The attached staff study on an important aspect of psychological strategy planning for Western Europe (PSB D-38) is submitted for information and approval of the recommendations (paragraphs 5 and 6).

2. The aim of the present study has been to analyze the approved national policy objectives, to make a preliminary assessment of U.S. psychological capabilities in the target area, together with the limiting factors operative therein, and to formulate a meaningful psychological objective. While some of the basic psychological problems which confront the United States in Western Europe have been identified, the ways and means by which such problems can be resolved have not been set forth. This latter task will of course become the principal concern of the planners once the recommendations have been approved by the Board.

3. In this context, the Board may wish to note that current intelligence indicates that anti-American attitudes and sentiments in Western Europe continue to develop at a rapid rate and are already hampering the achievement of U.S. security objectives. Hence the preparation of a psychological strategy plan designed to reduce Western European antagonisms to the United States and its purposes, should be considered a matter of priority.

/s/ Alan G. Kirk  
Director

Similar memos. sent to:

The Hon. William C. Foster  
Deputy Secretary of Defense

General Walter B. Smith  
Director of CIA

Brig. Gen. Millard C. Young, USAF  
Chief, JSPD, Joint Chiefs of Staff

The Hon. W. A. Harriman  
Director for Mutual Security

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PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

STAFF STUDY - PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY PLANNING FOR WESTERN EUROPE

PROBLEM

1. To determine the requirements of psychological strategy planning with respect to the achievement of national objectives in Western Europe.

ANALYSIS

2. See Annex.

CONCLUSIONS

3. United States psychological operations in Western Europe have not succeeded in reducing the growth of anti-American sentiments and attitudes but in fact may have unwittingly been contributing to them by too strong overt pressures.

4. Consideration of the sharp stresses and strains within the NATO alliance, in the light of Soviet capabilities to capitalize on such strains to the jeopardy of approved U.S. policy goals, indicates that in order to attain progress towards the reduction of Soviet power and influence in Europe, ways and means must be developed to increase the effectiveness of psychological operations aimed at the reduction of Western European antagonism to the United States and its purposes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

5. That the analysis and conclusions be noted.
6. That the Director be authorized to undertake the preparation of a psychological strategy plan for Western Europe with the objective of devising effective ways and means of reducing Western European antagonisms to, and achieving support for, the United States and the U.S. national purposes.

Attachment:

Annex - Analysis of  
Planning Tasks for  
Western Europe.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

ANALYSIS OF PLANNING TASKS FOR WESTERN EUROPE

1. Approved National Policy

A survey of approved national policy objectives with respect to Western Europe reveals the following explicit statement of urgent national security goals. These guiding points have been selected with due regard to the fact that in Europe the reduction of Soviet power and influence continues to have over-riding priority in the employment of our psychological capabilities.

- (a) to intensify and to accelerate the growth of confidence in and among the peoples and the governments of the free world, especially Western Europe ... in their capability to successfully deter aggression of Soviet communism, or to defeat it should it nevertheless occur, and to inspire concrete international, national and individual action accordingly. (Excerpt from NSC 114/2, "Objectives and Programs for National Security", October 18, 1951).
- (b) The United States should ... conduct, with great vigor, political warfare operations as an integral part of its over-all strategy, in order to reduce communist and neutralist influence, combat anti-American propaganda, and create stronger support for the purposes of United States foreign policy ... (Excerpt from NSC 135/3, "Reappraisal of United States Objectives and Strategy for National Security", September 25, 1952).
- (c) The United States should undertake systematically and consistently a program of clarifying to ... peoples of the free world, the complex problems of the free world in meeting the Soviet threat, the nature of that threat, the strength and resources the free world possesses to meet that threat, and to the extent possible the reasoning behind the general lines of policy and action described herein, in order to secure that public understanding and support which is essential to the success of our policies and actions. (Ibid.)
- (d) Outside the Soviet orbit there exists a need for increased and more selective political warfare operations by the United States and its allies to combat:
  - (1) The threat of local communist parties, which remains serious although the United States and its allies have demonstrated the ability to weaken communist organizations and reduce the communist potential for revolution and sabotage.

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- (2) U.S.S.R. propaganda directed with particular force against the United States.
- (3) In many parts of the world, distrust of the United States which weakens affirmative support for the purposes of the United States. (Ibid.)
- (e) ... to further encourage the economic unification and the political federation of Europe. (Excerpt from Section 101 (a), The Mutual Security Act of 1951.)
- (f) In the long run, satisfactory progress in terms of an increased measure of Continental European integration can only be secured within the broader framework of the North Atlantic Community ... (NSC 115, "Definition of United States Problems of the Defense of Europe and the German Contribution ...", August 1, 1951).

## 2. Assumptions

U.S. psychological strategy for Western Europe should be based on the premise that the following assumptions are valid during 1953 and 1954. If events should invalidate them, a re-examination of U.S. policies and programs in the area may be expected.

(a) The U.S.S.R. will neither initiate overt military aggression in Western Europe nor make any major move to decrease tensions by settlement of the German or Austrian questions, or other pending issues. The U.S.S.R. will continue its political warfare tactics designed to undermine European strength and unity and split the Western allies. In particular there is likely to be increased Soviet harassment of West Berlin, though probably not to the extent of a renewed blockade.

(b) The French and Italian communist parties, although slowly declining in strength, will remain a major social and political force, with substantial propaganda, subversive, and sabotage capabilities.

(c) While pro-U.S. coalition governments will continue to hold office in the major continental countries, their capabilities for firm and vigorous action to deal with major political, economic, and rearmament problems will remain limited. They will also be reluctant to take any actions which appear to increase the risks of general war.

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(d) There will be no major economic depression in the Western world during the time-span envisioned in this plan. On the other hand, Western Europe's economic recovery will remain precarious.

3. Estimate of U.S. Psychological Capabilities

In Western Europe, the following capabilities already exist, or should be developed:

(a) United States Department of State representatives to the European Governments, including those responsible for the Department's Cultural Affairs and Information programs, and the U.S. Special Representative to Europe, will continue to be in a position to influence the nation-states by direct representation and will also be able to have some indirect influence on Western European Government officials and the public at large through professional and social contacts.

(b) United States Department of State representatives to such multinational, and supranational organizations as the North Atlantic Council, the Council of Europe, the emerging European Political Community (Coal and Steel Community and the European Defense Community) will have a capability for influencing European official and private attitudes.

(c) Members of official United States economic and military missions to Western European Governments and to such multinational organizations, as SHAPE, OEEC, etc., will also possess a capability for influencing official and public attitudes and actions.

(d) United States military forces and their dependents stationed in Europe in fulfillment of United States security pledges to NATO constitute an important medium for conveying an impression of the United States and its purposes to the European peoples.

(e) The policies and administration of United States military aid and defense support programs in Western Europe, carried out by the Mutual Security Agency, can achieve a significant impact on United States

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psychological strategy for Western Europe and should be conceived and directed with this in mind.

(f) Other United States capabilities vis-a-vis Western Europe which have a direct bearing on reducing anti-American attitudes are:

- (1) U.S. members of international opinion-forming groups.
- (2) U.S. labor union representatives to foreign and international free-trade unions.
- (3) U.S. business representatives with interests abroad.
- (4) U.S. citizens engaged in commercial international mass-communications.
- (5) U.S. tourists travelling in organized tours under travel-agency direction and counsel.
- (6) Foreign nationals whose friendly orientation stems in part from visits to the United States under government-sponsored programs (e.g. productivity teams, exchange students, MDAP training programs, etc.)

(g) Additionally, the United States has a capability for influencing European opinion climate through (1) appropriate consultations and exchange of views, etc., with the appropriate representatives of the mass-media facilities in the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Germany, the Vatican, and Spain, and (2) similar consultations and exchanges of views and, to the extent practicable, participation in and support of the information program of NATIS, the Council of Europe, OEEC, and the emerging European Political Community.

#### 4. Adverse Factors

Despite the significant capabilities indicated above, progress towards achieving the United States security goals cited in paragraph 2 is being adversely affected by the following factors operating in the target area:

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(a) Resentments occasioned by the massive intervention of the United States in the domestic affairs of the several states, particularly resentments aroused by too strong overt pressures. Some European observers have concluded that "most frictions are not caused by policies of the U.S. Government but by ill-conceived and loud opinions spread through the media of mass communications."

(b) The reluctance of Continental countries to assume rearmament burdens due to a lack of clear agreement with the United States as to the nature of the Soviet threat.

(c) The continuing sense among certain economic interests that there is little to gain and much to lose from unification of Europe.

(d) The fear of war which although lessening is still present in the minds of many Western Europeans and is equated with defeat and occupation.

(e) The continuance of neutralist attitudes toward the United States, including hostile attitudes toward any visible evidence of U.S. hegemony in Europe, stemming from a conclusion on the part of many Europeans who tend to consider U.S. foreign policy as beneficial solely to the United States and therefore inimical to Europe.

(f) The Communist Party apparatus in France and Italy and neo-Nazi and other Right radical movements in major Continental countries, which are an endemic source of anti-American propaganda.

(g) Benefactor-beneficiary relationships between the United States and its European allies together with the operations of U.S. East-West trade policies which provide neutralist and communist propaganda with opportunities to claim that the United States is "satellizing" the nations of Europe.

(h) Colonial area problems in which anti-U.S. attitudes in Continental Europe are intensified by a misunderstanding of the role of the United States in pressing for new political and economic measures in certain

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colonial areas.

(i) The manner in which our psychological operations have been employed to deal with these factors, which results in the following:

- (1) Europeans recognize that the strategic initiative in the West lies inevitably with the United States. They feel impotent to initiate basic strategy in the East-West conflict.
- (2) However, both because they are resigned to U.S. leadership as a condition of their survival and because they fear that U.S. strategy without their cooperation would be less acceptable than it is now, they have applied themselves to the military defense effort which the United States has urged upon them.
- (3) Nevertheless sharp differences in judgment concerning the amount and kinds of strength necessary to act as an effective deterrent to the Soviet Union continue to exist between the Europeans and ourselves. Significant European opinion groups hold that the Soviet Union has no intention of risking a major war in the near future, that it will risk war only as an act of final desperation, or that a greater danger of Soviet aggression lies in political, economic or ideological warfare. Essentially these Europeans tend to believe that the United States has over-estimated the military threat and under-estimated the non-military threat. They are therefore reluctant to support rearmament of the magnitude that we recommend or with the urgency that we recommend because of the presumed setback to the development of their economic and social resources.

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- (4) This experience of being obliged to make a strenuous effort, at the expense of private values they cherish, without conviction as to the likelihood of success, and without the power to alter basic strategy, sets up serious frustrations which are inevitably directed against the initiating power--the United States.
- (5) As a result, generalized European dissatisfaction with the state of the world, and a growing tendency in some quarters to regard the cause of anti-communism as purely American rather than a matter of utmost concern to Europeans, are markedly present, and U.S. psychological operations designed to achieve the national security goals set forth in paragraph 2 are being conducted in an unfavorable climate of anti-American attitudes and sentiments.

5. Soviet Capabilities and Possible Courses of Action

In addition to the purely European factors examined in the foregoing paragraphs, the problem is further complicated by the existence of Soviet capabilities which are being, or can be utilized, to intensify anti-American attitudes and reduce the effectiveness of U.S. operations, through such programs as:

- (a) The "Hate-America" campaign which impugns the moral purposes of the United States and attempts to isolate the United States from the rest of the world.
- (b) The peace campaign which attempts to hamper rearmament, divide the United States from Europe, impose moral sanctions against the use of ultra-destructive weapons, and prepare a basis for future war-guilt accusations.
- (c) The "Neutralist" campaign which, capitalizing on the desire of European nations to gain their traditional initiative in world affairs, attempts to weaken adherence to NATO obligations.

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(d) Campaigns of opportunity based on current strains in Korea, Indochina, and colonial areas, designed to split the United States from its Western Allies.

(e) Fear campaigns based on predictions of a disastrous economic slump in the free world, touched off by a recession in the United States, and the raising of the spectre of war within the capitalist world.

6. Conclusions

(a) Pertinent evidence makes clear that U.S. psychological operations in Western Europe have not succeeded in reducing the growth of anti-American sentiments and attitudes but, in fact, may have unwittingly been contributing to them by too strong overt pressures. As a result, communists have often managed to identify measures designed to strengthen the Atlantic Community with U.S. interests, thereby putting unstable European Governments on the defensive and forcing them to deny accusations of U.S. domination. In the present context, U.S. pressures upon the Europeans to strive for goals which they feel are not vitally their own results in a negative morale effect, and all U.S. Government propaganda in Europe suffers a loss of effectiveness. In sum, a situation has been created in which our overt psychological operations have evidenced a gradually diminishing leverage on Western European minds, indicating that new ways and means must be developed to make such operations more effective.

(b) Sharp stresses and strains within the NATO alliance, in the light of Soviet capabilities to capitalize upon such strains to the jeopardy of approved U.S. policy goals, indicate that in order to attain progress towards the reduction of Soviet power and influence in Europe, the reduction of Western European antagonisms to the United States and its purposes should be considered a key objective of our psychological strategy.

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**7. Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Psychological Strategy Board:

- (a) Note the foregoing preliminary analysis and conclusions.
- (b) Authorize the Director to undertake the preparation of a psychological strategy plan for Western Europe with the objective of devising effective ways and means of reducing Western European antagonisms to, and achieving support for, the United States and the U.S. national purposes.

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